

WIMBORNE AND CRANBORNE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.O.R. Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1944.

The Minister of Health has directed that the report for 1944 shall again be abbreviated and confined to essential matters and exceptional measures. He asks that information shall be included on the steps taken to combat infestation and on the state of water supplies.

Statistics are to be preserved but not included in this interim report.

There was no unusual prevalence of notifiable epidemic disease and the health of the population remained good.

Immunisation against diphtheria proceeds satisfactorily. It is estimated that on December 31st, 1944 72.5 per cent of the child population aged 5 to 15 were immunised and 57.5 per cent of those aged under 5. The latter figure is a considerable improvement on previous estimates.

Infestation of the verminous condition Scabies continues to be unduly prevalent. Pediculosis capitis, though frequent, is not abnormally common. The minor ailment clinic established at the Ferndown First Aid Post did very valuable work during the year in treating these and other minor infections. The more severe cases and those unsuitable for outpatient treatment were admitted to the Blandford Isolation Hospital. Unfortunately both these institutions will be closed down at or soon after the end of 1944 and this Council will be left without any provision for carrying out its duties and powers under those sections of the Public Health Act which deal with verminous conditions and under the Scabies Order 1941.

Neighbouring districts will be in a similar position and in my opinion a central cleansing station, with some inpatient accommodation, is urgently required to serve the group of Districts at this end of the County which are without the means of providing treatment for verminous and other minor infections.

Water Supplies.

Nine Parishes are provided, some only partly, with piped supplies. The remaining 16 parishes are not so provided.

Five separate waterworks share in supplying the nine Parishes, namely the Bournemouth and Poole Works, two smaller works belonging to this Council, and one to a private estate. The majority of the houses so supplied have water laid on internally. Standpipes are the method in a few cases.

The remainder of the district is dependant on wells, which vary in efficiency, or in a few areas on stored rain water. In some parts the wells yield a water of very inferior quality. This applies to five parishes. In other parts the yield is very deficient in quantity. The shortage of water has been most serious during much of 1944 and still remains serious in May 1945. It may be said in general that the water supply of those parts of the district not supplied with piped water is bad and in urgent need of improvement. In such areas the Council's building programme is delayed or made very expensive.

Water Supplies. Bacteriological examinations have been regularly made of the piped supplies at Verwood and Cranborne. 11 samples were taken and in every instance supplies were found to be Class 1 Highly satisfactory. No contamination in any form to piped supplies occurred during the year. The same cannot be said of the well water

Medical Officer of Health



